

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claims:

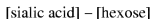
Claim 1 (Previously Presented): A modified serogroup W135 meningococcal capsular saccharide, conjugated to a carrier protein, wherein: (a) between 2-9% of the sialic acid residues in the saccharide are O-acetylated at the 7 position; and/or (b) between 35-55% of the sialic acid residues in the saccharide are O-acetylated at the 9 position.

Claim 2 (Withdrawn): A modified serogroup Y meningococcal capsular saccharide, conjugated to a carrier protein, wherein (a) between 2-9% of the sialic acid residues in the saccharide are O-acetylated at the 7 position; and/or (b) between 35-55% of the sialic acid residues in the saccharide are O-acetylated at the 9 position.

Claim 3 (Previously Presented): The modified meningococcal capsular saccharide of claim 1 or claim 2, wherein between 4-8% of the sialic acid residues in the saccharide are O-acetylated at the 7 position.

Claim 4 (Previously Presented): The modified meningococcal capsular saccharide of claim 1 or claim 2, wherein between 40-50% of the sialic acid residues in the saccharide are O-acetylated at the 9 position.

Claim 5 (Previously Presented): A modified meningococcal capsular saccharide conjugated to a carrier protein, wherein the saccharide comprises  $n$  or more repeating units of the disaccharide unit:



where the hexose is either galactose or glucose and  $n$  is an integer from 1 to 100, and wherein:

(a)  $x\%$  of the sialic acid residues in said  $n$  or more repeating units are O-acetylated at the 7 position; and/or

(b) when hexose is galactose,  $y\%$  of the sialic acid residues in said  $n$  or more repeating units are O-acetylated at the 9 position, and when hexose is glucose,  $y\%$  of the sialic acid residues in said  $n$  or more repeating units are O-acetylated at the 9 position,

where: when hexose is galactose,  $x$  is between 2-9 and  $y$  is between 35-55; and when hexose is glucose,  $x$  is between 2-9 and  $y$  is between 35-55.

Claim 6 (Original): The saccharide of claim 5, wherein hexose is galactose, about 6% of the sialic acid residues in said  $n$  or more repeating units are O-acetylated at the 7 position, and about 43% of the sialic acid residues in said  $n$  or more repeating units are O-acetylated at the 9 position.

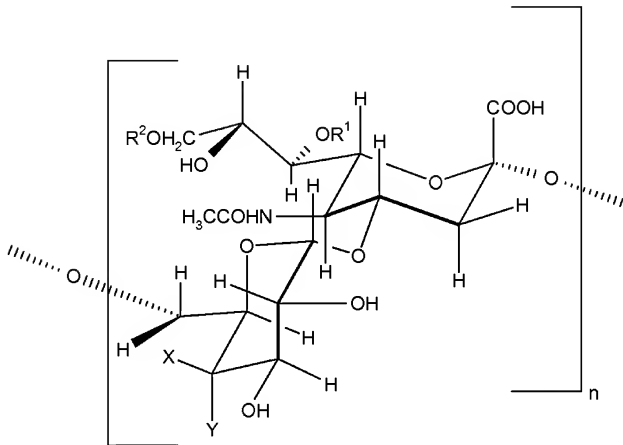
Claim 7 (Original): The saccharide of claim 5, wherein hexose is glucose, about 6% of the sialic acid residues in said  $n$  or more repeating units are O-acetylated at the 7 position, and about 45% of the sialic acid residues in said  $n$  or more repeating units are O-acetylated at the 9 position.

Claim 8 (Previously Presented): A composition comprising  $a$  molecules of serogroup W135 meningococcal capsular saccharide, wherein (i) the average number of sialic acid residues per capsular saccharide molecule is  $b$ , and wherein: (a) between 2-9% of the  $a$ - $b$  serogroup W135 sialic acid residues in the composition are O-acetylated at the 7 position; and/or (b) between 35-55% of the  $a$ - $b$  serogroup W135 sialic acid residues in the composition are O-acetylated at the 9 position, and (ii) the saccharide is conjugated to a carrier protein.

Claim 9 (Withdrawn): A composition comprising  $a$  molecules of serogroup Y meningococcal capsular saccharide, wherein (i) the average number of sialic acid residues per capsular saccharide molecule is  $b$ , and wherein: (a) between 2-9% of the  $a$ - $b$  serogroup Y sialic acid residues in the composition are O-acetylated at the 7 position; and/or (b) between 35-55% of the  $a$ - $b$  serogroup Y sialic acid residues in the composition are O-acetylated at the 9 position, (ii) the saccharide is conjugated to a carrier protein.

Claim 10 (Cancelled).

Claim 11 (Currently Amended): A saccharide comprising  $n$  or more repeats of the following disaccharide unit:



-  $n$  is an integer from 1 to 100,

- X and Y are different groups selected from -H and -OH,

-  $R_1$  is independently selected from -H and -COCH<sub>3</sub> and may be the same or different in each disaccharide unit,

- R<sub>2</sub> is independently selected from -H and -COCH<sub>3</sub> and may be the same or different in each disaccharide unit, and,

- when X is -OH and Y is -H, (a) 2-10% of R[[<sup>1</sup>]]<sub>1</sub> are -COCH<sub>3</sub> and/or (b) 35-55% of R[[<sup>2</sup>]]<sub>2</sub> are -COCH<sub>3</sub>[[.]]<sub>a</sub>

- when X is -H and Y is -OH, (a) 2-9% of R[[<sup>1</sup>]]<sub>1</sub> are -COCH<sub>3</sub> and/or (b) 35-55% of R[[<sup>2</sup>]]<sub>2</sub> are -COCH<sub>3</sub>,

and wherein the saccharide is conjugated to a carrier protein.

Claim 12 (Currently Amended): The saccharide of any one of claims 1, 3-7 and 11, wherein the saccharide has an average degree of polymerisation of less than 30.

Claim 13 (Currently Amended): The saccharide of any one of claims 1, 3-7 and 11, wherein the carrier protein is selected from the group consisting of: diphtheria toxoid, tetanus toxoid, *H. influenzae* protein D, and CRM<sub>197</sub>.

Claim 14 (Currently Amended): An immunogenic composition comprising (a) a modified capsular saccharide conjugate of any one of claims 1, 3-7 and 11, and (b) a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

Claim 15 (Original): The composition of claim 14, in aqueous form.

Claim 16 (Original): The composition of claim 14, in lyophilised form.

Claim 17 (Previously Presented): The composition of claim 14, further comprising a capsular saccharide antigen from serogroup C of *N.meningitidis*.

Claim 18 (Previously Presented): The composition of claim 14, further comprising a capsular saccharide antigen from serogroup A of *N.meningitidis*.

Claim 19 (Previously Presented): The composition of claim 18, wherein the serogroup A antigen is a modified saccharide in which one or more of the hydroxyl groups on the native saccharide has/have been replaced by a blocking group.

Claim 20 (Previously Presented): The composition of claim 14, further comprising an antigen from serogroup B of *N.meningitidis*.

Claim 21 (Previously Presented): The composition of claim 14, further comprising a saccharide antigen from *Haemophilus influenzae* type B.

Claim 22 (Previously Presented): The composition of claim 14, further comprising an antigen from *Streptococcus pneumoniae*.

Claim 23 (Previously Presented): The composition of claim 14, further comprising one or more of: an antigen from hepatitis A virus; an antigen from hepatitis B virus; an antigen from *Bordetella pertussis*; a diphtheria toxoid; a tetanus toxoid; and/or a poliovirus antigen.

Claim 24 (Cancelled).

Claim 25 (Withdrawn): A method for raising an antibody response in a mammal, comprising administering a composition of claim 14 to the mammal.

Claim 26 (Cancelled).

Claim 27 (Previously Presented): A process for preparing an immunogenic conjugate comprising the steps of: (1) providing a starting serogroup W135 or serogroup Y meningococcal capsular saccharide and a carrier protein, either or both of which is/are optionally modified to render it/them reactive towards the other; (2) forming a covalent bond between the saccharide and the carrier protein; and (3) purifying the resulting glycoconjugates, wherein, between steps (1) and (3), the degree of O-acetylation at the 9 position of sialic acid residues in the starting saccharide increases to 35-55%.